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PEORIA PECTINELLUM (CHRÉTIEN, 1911),
POSSIBLE CORRECT NAME FOR *HYPSTROPA SEMILUTEELLA*
(CHRÉTIEN, 1922) (*Lepidoptera Pyralidae Phycitinae*) FROM MALTA

SUMMARY

The aim of this note is to correct the identity of a *Hypsotropa* species occurring on the Maltese Islands, from *Hypsotropa semiluteella* (Chrétien, 1922) to *Peoria pectinellum* (Chrétien, 1911). *Hypsotropa semiluteella* is probably a new synonym of *Peoria pectinellum*.

Key words. *Hypsotropa semiluteella*, *Peoria pectinellum* mistaken identity, Malta.

RIASSUNTO

Peoria pectinellum (Chrétien, 1911), *il nome corretto per la Hypsotropa semiluteella* (Chrétien, 1922) *di Malta*. Lo scopo di questa nota è di correggere l'identità di una specie di *Hypsotropa* Zeller, 1848 presente nelle isole Maltesi, da *Hypsotropa semiluteella* a *Peoria pectinellum* (Chrétien, 1911). *Hypsotropa semiluteella* probabilmente è un sinonimo nuovo di *Peoria pectinellum*.

Parole chiave. *Hypsotropa semiluteella*, *Peoria pectinellum*, identificazione errata, Malta.

INTRODUCTION

From amongst material sent to the late Dr Willi Sauter of Zurich during the early 1980s, he identified a specimen, a female, belonging to *Lymira semiluteella* Chrétien, 1922. The taxon *semiluteella* was later transferred to the genus *Hypsotropa* Zeller, 1848. This is incorrect. Recently we had occasion to send this specimen and many others to Frantisek Slamka who con-

firmed that it belongs to *Peoria pectinellum* (Chrétien, 1911), while *H. semiluteella* is probably a new synonym of *P. pectinellum*. Correct identification of Maltese specimens, identified as *H. semiluteella*, was done based on the male genitalia of the type specimen of *Speiroceras pectinellum* Chrétien, 1911 saved in coll. MNHN Paris (G. Leraut, pers. comm to F. Slamka). Unfortunately, the type specimen of *Lymira semiluteella* was not found in coll. MNHN Paris.

Hypsotropa semiluteella ?syn. nov., is a north African species originally recorded from three males collected during April-May by Powell from Mras-sine in Morocco, and a female collected by Alluoud from Kasba-Tadia, also in Morocco. (Chrétien in OBERTHUR, 1922). From the numerous literature on the Pyralidae, it appears that the mis-identified record for *Lymira semiluteella* from Malta was also the only record for Europe (SAMMUT, 1984, 1985, 2000, 2020). Accordingly, *semiluteella*, unless it has been recorded by other lepidopterists from elsewhere in Europe, does not form part of the European fauna.

Peoria pectinellum (Chrétien, 1911) has a fairly wide European distribution. It has been recorded from Spain, Italy, including Sicily and Sardinia, Greece, Bulgaria, Albania, Croatia and Turkey, and from Morocco and Algeria in North Africa (KEMAL & KOÇAK, 2020).

MATERIAL EXAMINED: MALTA, (♀) Dwejra, l/o Rabat, [35°54 21 N; 14°22 52 E 200m.] 10.v.1983 Sammut leg. [originally determined by W. Sauter as *Lymira semiluteella*] [GP Slamka 2139] (see Fig. 1); (♂) 12.v.2006 [GP Slamka 2140]; (4♂♂) 30.iv 1999 Seguna leg; (♂) 5.v.2005 Seguna leg; (♀) 28.iv.2006 Sammut leg; (♂) 25.iv.2007 Sammut leg, [GP Slamka 2142]; (♀) 25.iv.2007 Seguna leg; (♂) 25.iv.2007 Seguna leg; (3♂♂) 22.v.2009 Sammut leg; (♂) Dingli, Rdum Madliena 18.v.1996 Seguna leg; (♂) 9.v.2003 Sammut leg; (2♂♂) Mtaħleb, 7.v.1986, Sammut leg; (6♂♂) 15.v.1985 Sammut leg; (2♀♀, 18♂♂) Bidnija 2.v.1997 Seguna leg; (♀) 25.iv 2007 Seguna leg; (2♂♂) Mellie a, il-Kortin, 15.vii.2006 H. Borg-Barthet leg; (♂) Mellieħa, Marfa Ridge, 14.iv.2007 [GP Slamka 2127] Seguna leg; (2♂♂, 1♀) Mellieħa, Paradise Bay, 18.v.1997, Seguna leg; (3♂♂) Qormi, Wied il-Kbir 29.iv.2007 Seguna leg; (♂) Naxxar, tas-Saghjtjar, 1.v.1997; (♂) 3.v.1997; (♂) 4.v.1997; (♀) 11.v.1997; (3♂♂) 22.v.1997; (♂) 3.v.1998; (♀) 6.iv.1998; (♂) 16.v.1998; (♂) 9.v.2005 [all Naxxar material collected by Seguna] (♂) Pembroke 5.iv.1990; (2♂♂) 22.iv.1990; (♂) 27.iv.1990; (♂) 10.iv.1991; (♂) 17.iv.1991; (♂) 25.iv.1991; (♂) 5.v.1991; (♂) 27.v.1991; (2♂♂) 12.v.1992; 1.v.2006. [all Pembroke material collected by Catania].



Fig. 1 — MALTA (♀) Dwejra, l/o Rabat, [35°54 21 N; 14°22 52 E 200m.] 10.v.1983 Sammut leg. [originally determined by W. Sauter as *Lymira semiluteella*] [GP Slamka 2139].



Fig. 2 — (♂) Mellicha, il-Kortin, 15.vii.2006 H. Borg-Barthet leg.

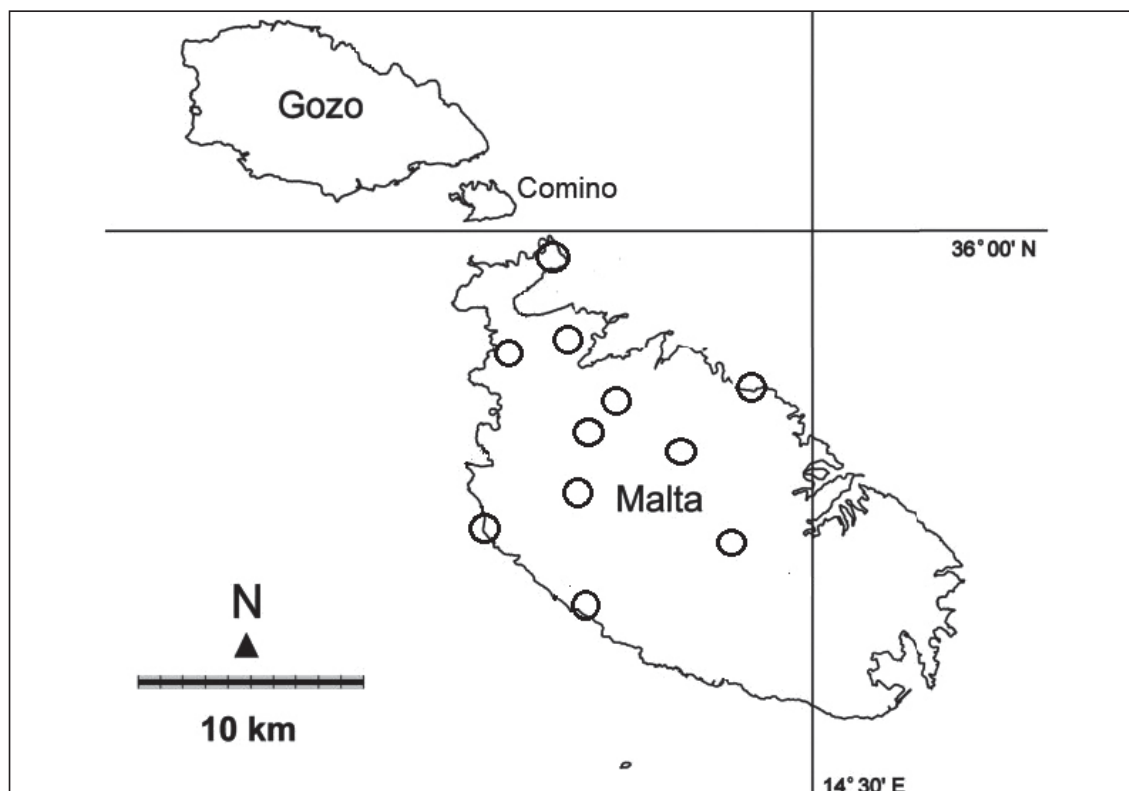


Fig. 3 — Map of the Maltese Islands showing localities where *P. pectinellum* was recorded.

CONCLUSION

Peoria pectinellum is very similar to the other *Peoria* species occurring in Malta, namely *Peoria incarnata* (Staudinger, 1879), first recorded for Malta under the name *Postemmalcera palaeartella* (Turati, 1917) (AMSEL, 1955). However, *pectinellum* is easily separable from *incarnata* because the former lacks completely the rosy-red colour of the forewings. All the localities from which *pectinellum* has been recorded are mainly rocky garigue. The fact that it has been recorded from different localities in four consecutive months of the year suggests that the species is breeding in Malta and that it is probably univoltine. However, the larval foodplant has not yet been identified.

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